

CORA S. W. CHAN

The University of Hong Kong
Faculty of Law
10/F Cheng Yu Tung Tower
Pokfulam Road, Hong Kong
+852 3917 2957 corachan@hku.hk
https://www.law.hku.hk/academic_staff/cora-chan/

EDUCATION

DPhil in Law, University of Oxford (2022)

BCL, University of Oxford (Distinction; Ralph Chiles CBE Award in Human Rights, 2007)

PCLL, The University of Hong Kong (Distinction, 2006)

LLB, The University of Hong Kong (1st Class Honours, 2005)

BSocSc (Government & Laws), The University of Hong Kong (1st Class Honours, 2004)

EMPLOYMENT

May 2024 – present Professor, Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong

2015 – 2024 Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong

2009 – 2015 Assistant Professor, Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong

2007 – 2009 Trainee Solicitor, Baker & McKenzie, Hong Kong

SPECIALISED AREAS

Constitutional law and theory, administrative law, human rights

AWARDS AND DISTINCTIONS

1. My monograph, *Deference in Human Rights Adjudication* (Oxford University Press 2024), has been awarded the following distinctions:
 - Special Mention for the 2025 International Society of Public Law Book Prize
 - One of two finalists for the 2024 Book of the Year Award from the International Forum on the Future of Constitutionalism
 - The University of Hong Kong Research Output Prize 2025 (awarded to the best research output in a faculty of the University in the relevant year)
2. Awarded the inaugural Rosie Young 90 Medal for Outstanding Young Woman Scholar in 2021. Two medals are awarded by HKU each year, with one reserved for scholars from the medical discipline. I was selected as the first recipient of the medal from all non-medical disciplines.
3. Awarded the 2017-2018 Outstanding Young Researcher Award by The University of Hong Kong. This award is granted in recognition of scholars in the University below the age of 40 who have produced 'extremely high quality research'.
4. Paper on 'Proportionality and Invariable Baseline Intensity of Review' awarded the 2012 Best Paper Prize by the Society of Legal Scholars from eligible entries amongst some 270 papers presented at the Society's annual conference. The Society is 'the oldest as well as the largest learned society in the field of law'.
5. In addition to obtaining the competitive Early Career Scheme grant of the Hong Kong Research Grants Council, my grant proposal on 'Judicial deference in constitutional rights adjudication' was also awarded the 2013 Early Career Award by the same body in recognition of the excellent quality of the proposal. Only 5% of top junior scholars were shortlisted for this award.
6. Article on 'From Legal Pluralism to Dual State: Evolution of the Relationship Between the Chinese and Hong Kong Legal Orders' awarded the 2023 Faculty Research Output Prize by HKU.
7. Article on 'Deference, Expertise and Information-Gathering Powers' awarded the 2012-2013 Research Output Prize by The University of Hong Kong. This prize is awarded to the best research output in a faculty of the University in the relevant year.
8. Paper on 'Deference, Expertise and Intelligence-Gathering Powers' was one of the 4 shortlisted for the 2011 Best Paper Prize by the Society of Legal Scholars from eligible entries amongst some 300 papers presented at the Society's annual conference.
9. Doris Zimmern HKU-Cambridge Hughes Hall Fellowship 2013-2014.
10. Article on 'Proportionality and Invariable Baseline Intensity of Review' awarded the 2014 Faculty Research Output Prize by HKU.

11. Article on ‘Implementing China and Hong Kong’s Preliminary Reference System: Transposability of Article 267 TFEU Principles’ awarded the 2015 Faculty Research Output Prize by HKU.
12. HKU Faculty of Law Outstanding Teaching Award 2014

SELECT PUBLICATIONS

Monograph

1. *Deference in Human Rights Adjudication* (Oxford University Press, 2024)
 - Reviewed in [*Law Quarterly Review*](#), [*JOTWELL*](#), and [*Public Law*](#)
 - Awarded a Special Mention for the 2025 International Society of Public Law Annual Book Prize
 - One of two finalists for the 2024 Book of the Year Award from the International Forum on the Future of Constitutionalism
 - The University of Hong Kong Research Output Prize 2025

Edited collection

2. Cora Chan and Fiona de Londras (eds), *China’s National Security: Endangering Hong Kong’s Rule of Law?* (Hart Publishing, 2020)

Journal articles

3. Cora Chan, ‘Liberal Autocracy: Possibility and Stability’ (2026) 26(2) *Theoretical Inquiries in Law* 44-66
4. ‘Law and Authoritarian Transition: Anatomy of Hong Kong’s Post-2019 Constitutional Order’ *Éditions Thémis* (2025)
5. ‘Oratorical Leadership of Chief Justices in Post-Handover Hong Kong’ *International Journal of Constitutional Law* (2025) 23(1) *International Journal of Constitutional Law* 298–319 (with Julius Yam)
6. ‘Gender, Democracy, and the Legal Academy: Afterword to the Foreword by Gráinne de Búrca, Rosalind Dixon, and Marcela Prieto Rudolphy’ (2024) 22(4) *International Journal of Constitutional Law* 1099-1107
7. ‘Scholarship in Times of Constitutional Transformation: A View from Hong Kong’ (2023) 24 *Human Rights Law Review* 1-15
8. “‘Everything Everywhere All At Once’: Johannes Chan and the Shaping of Hong Kong’s Liberal Common Law Legal System’ (2023) 53 *Hong Kong Law Journal* 109-119
9. ‘From Legal Pluralism to Dual State: Evolution of the Relationship Between the Chinese and Hong Kong Legal Orders’ (2022) 16(1) *Law & Ethics of Human Rights* 99-135

10. 'Can Hong Kong Remain a Liberal Enclave within China? Analysis of the Hong Kong National Security Law' [2021] *Public Law* 271-292
11. 'The Judicial Role in the Surveillance State' *University of Oxford Human Rights Hub Journal* (2020)
12. 'Demise of "One Country, Two Systems"? Reflections on the Hong Kong Rendition Saga' (2019) 49(2) *Hong Kong Law Journal* 447-457
13. 'Thirty Years from Tiananmen: China, Hong Kong, and the Ongoing Experiment to Preserve Liberal Values in an Authoritarian State' (2019) 17(2) *International Journal of Constitutional Law* 439-452.
14. 'Problems with *Wednesbury* Unreasonableness in Contract Law: Lessons from Public Law' (2019) 135(Jan) *Law Quarterly Review* 88-113 (with Ernest Lim)
15. 'Rights, Proportionality and Deference: A Study of Post-Handover Judgments in Hong Kong' (2018) 48(1) *Hong Kong Law Journal* 51-78
16. 'Legalizing Politics: An Evaluation of Hong Kong's Recent Attempt at Democratization' (2017) 16(2) *Election Law Journal* 296-305
17. 'A Preliminary Framework for Measuring Deference in Rights Reasoning' (2016) 14(4) *International Journal of Constitutional Law* 851-882
18. 'Implementing China and Hong Kong's Preliminary Reference System: Transposability of Article 267 TFEU Principles' [2014] *Public Law* 642-661
19. 'The Burden of Proof under the Human Rights Act' [2014] *Judicial Review* 46-51
20. 'Proportionality and Invariable Baseline Intensity of Review' (2013) 33(1) *Legal Studies* 1-21
21. 'Deference, Expertise and Information-Gathering Powers' (2013) 33(4) *Legal Studies* 598-620
22. 'State Immunity: Reassessing the Boundaries of Judicial Autonomy in Hong Kong' [2012] *Public Law* 601-610
23. 'Deference and the Separation of Powers: An Assessment of the Court's Constitutional and Institutional Competences' (2011) 41 *Hong Kong Law Journal* 7-25
24. 'Reconceptualising the Relationship between the Mainland Chinese Legal System and the Hong Kong Legal System' (2011) 6(1) *Asian Journal of Comparative Law* 1-28
25. 'Judicial Deference at Work: Some Reflections on *Chan Kin Sum* and *Kong Yun Ming*' (2010) 40 *Hong Kong Law Journal* 1-10

Case notes, international survey and book reviews

26. 'Review of Anne Carter, Proportionality and Facts in Constitutional Adjudication' (2024) 54(3) *Hong Kong Law Journal* 709-715
27. 'Hong Kong – Public Entertainment Licence Only Required if Admission is Controlled. Court of Final Appeal Decision, T v Commissioner of Police [2014] HKCFA 71' [2015] *Public Law* 161-162 (International Survey)
28. 'Hong Kong – Post-Operative Transsexuals Have Right to Marry, Court of Final Appeal Decision, W v Registrar of Marriages' [2014] *Public Law* 343-344 (International Survey)
29. 'Introduction: *Kong Yunming v Director of Social Welfare*' (2014) *Hong Kong Law Journal* 1-5

Book chapters

30. 《香港居民的權利與義務》，陳弘毅主編《香港基本法概論》，三聯書店（香港）有限公司（楊曉楠翻譯，2024）
31. 'Pluralizing Constitutionalism' in Vicki Jackson and Madhav Khosla (eds) *Redefining Comparative Constitutional Law: Essays for Mark Tushnet* (OUP) ch 24
32. 'Subnational Constitutionalism: Hong Kong' in David S. Law (ed), *Constitutionalism in Context* (Cambridge University Press, 2022) pp 377-402
33. 'Yash Ghai and the Constitutional Experiment of "One Country, Two Systems" in Hong Kong' in Humphrey Sipalla and J. Osogo Ambani (eds), *Furthering Constitutions, Birthing Peace: Liber Amicorum Yash Pal Ghai* (Strathmore University Press, 2021) pp 303-335 (with Albert Chen)
34. 'The Executive' in Johannes Chan and C.L. Lim (eds), *Law of the Hong Kong Constitution*, 3rd edition (Thomson Reuters, 2021) ch 10
35. 'China's National Security in Hong Kong: A Challenge for Constitutionalism, Autonomy, and the Rule of Law' in Cora Chan and Fiona de Londras (eds), *China's National Security: Endangering Hong Kong's Rule of Law?* (Hart Publishing, 2020) pp 1-15 (with Fiona de Londras)
36. 'Building Rule of Law Resilience Through Institutions: a Proposed Institutional Infrastructure for National Security Legislation' in Cora Chan and Fiona de Londras (eds), *China's National Security: Endangering Hong Kong's Rule of Law?* (Hart Publishing, 2020) pp 275-296 (with Fiona de Londras)
37. 'A Principled Approach to Judicial Deference for Hong Kong' in Guobin Zhu (ed), *Deference to the Administration in Judicial Review: Comparative Perspectives* (Springer, 2019) pp 203-229

38. ‘Business as Usual: Deference in Counter-Terrorism Judicial Review’ in Fergal F. Davis and Fiona de Londras (eds) *Critical Debates on Counter-Terrorism Judicial Review* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014) pp 228-250
39. ‘Adult Guardianship Law in China: Traditional Values and Modern International Developments’ in A. Kimberley Dayton (ed), *Comparative Perspectives on Adult Guardianship*, (Durham, North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 2014) pp 123-136 (with Rebecca Lee)

Academic blogs and podcast

40. ‘Liberal Enclaves,’ New York University’s ‘Democracy Project: 100 Ideas for 100 Days’, 26 Sept 2025, <https://democracyproject.org/posts/liberal-enclaves>
41. ‘Weight and Balance: Understanding Daly’s Framework of Common Law Administrative Law’ *Administrative Law Blog*, 4 April 2022, <https://adminlawblog.org/2022/04/04/cora-chan-weight-and-balance-understanding-dalys-framework-of-common-law-administrative-law/>
42. Podcast with Maximilian Steinbeis: *Corona Constitutional #13: In Hongkong wird es dunkel*, *VerfBlog*, 2020/4/21, <https://verfassungsblog.de/corona-constitutional-13-in-hongkong-wird-es-dunkel/>
43. Report on Hong Kong, in Richard Albert, David Landau, Pietro Faraguna, Simon Drugda (eds) *The I-CONNECT-Clough Center 2018 Global Review of Constitutional Law* (Clough Center for the Study of Constitutional Democracy, 2019) (with PY Lo and Swati Jhaveri)
44. ‘Demise of “One Country, Two Systems”?’ Reflections on the Hong Kong Rendition Saga’ *VerfBlog*, 2019/6/28, <https://verfassungsblog.de/demise-of-one-country-two-systems/>
45. ‘The Legal Limits on Beijing’s Powers of Interpreting the Basic Law’ HKU Legal Scholarship Blog, 3 November 2016, available at <http://researchblog.law.hku.hk/2016/11/cora-chan-on-legal-limits-of-beijings.html>
46. ‘When, if ever, will Hong Kong see democracy?’ U.K. Constitutional Law Blog, 7 July 2014, available at <http://ukconstitutionallaw.org/2014/07/07/comment-on-hong-kong-cora-chan-when-if-ever-will-hong-kong-see-democracy/>

RESEARCH GRANTS

1. 2025-2027: Hong Kong Research Grants Council’s General Research Fund. Project title: ‘Liberal Regions in Illiberal States’ (PI; fund awarded: HK\$527,490; ongoing)
2. 2017-2019: British Academy / Leverhulme Small Research Grant. Project title: ‘China’s National Security: Endangering Hong Kong’s Rule of Law?’ (co-

applicant with Fiona de Londras, University of Birmingham; fund awarded: GBP 9,350; completed)

3. 2013-2017: Hong Kong Research Grants Council's Early Career Grant. Project title: 'Judicial Deference in Constitutional Rights Adjudication: Constructing an Approach for Post-Handover Hong Kong'. (PI; fund awarded: HK\$501,448; completed)
4. 2016-2021: Co-investigator of a project on 'Constitutional Conventions in the Hong Kong Legislative Council' funded by National Philosophy and Social Science Fund of China. (PI: Huang Mingtao, Wuhan University; fund awarded: RMB 200,000; completed)

EDITORIAL POSITIONS

- Member, Advisory Board, *International Journal of Constitutional Law* (Mar 2017 – present)
- Member, Editorial Committee, *Public Law* (Jan 2023 – present)
- Member, Advisory Board, *Constitutional Studies* (Mar 2025 – present)
- Member, Advisory Board, Hart Studies in Constitutional Theory Series (Sept 2021 – present)
- Member, Advisory Board, Springer series in Contemporary Chinese Civil and Commercial Law (April 2021 – present)
- Editor, *Asian Journal of Comparative Law* (Sept 2021 – present)
- Editor, *Asia-Pacific Journal on Human Rights and the Law* (April 2013 – present)
- Editor, *Hong Kong Law Journal* (June 2011 – present)
- Editor, *Revista de Investigações Constitucionais* (Journal of Constitutional Law Research) (Universidade Federal do Paraná, Brazil) (July 2021 – present)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Advisory Council Member, Oxford Bonavero Institute of Human Rights (June 2023 – present)
- Chair, Executive Committee, Association for Asian Constitutional Studies (Oct 2025 – present)
- Member, International Society of Public Law Book Prize Committee 2026

- Advisory Board Member, Sydney Asia Pacific Judicial Dialogue hosted by the University of New South Wales Resilient Democracy Lab (Jan 2026 – present)
- Member of the Law Panel for the Research Assessment Exercise 2026 conducted by Hong Kong’s University Grants Committee (2024 – present)
- Member of the Law Panel for the Research Assessment Exercise 2020 conducted by Hong Kong’s University Grants Committee (2018 – 2021)
- Former member, General Council of the International Society of Public Law (elected 2017)
- Appointed by the European University Institute as an external member of its Selection Committee for a Chair in Constitutional Law
- External reviewer, Singapore’s Social Science Research Council Social Science and Humanities Research Fellowship nomination
- Member of the Constitutional and Legal Tools Workstream of the ‘Prevention Project’ led by the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at New York University (2020 – 2024)
- Member of the Steering Committee of the White Paper on Law in Support of Democracy for the International Law Association’s 150th anniversary (2021 – 2023)
- Co-Chair of the Planning and Priorities Sub-Committee for the Inaugural Younger Scholars Forum of the 20th Congress of the International Academy of Comparative Law held in Fukuoka, Japan (July 2018)

KEYNOTES, PLENARIES AND OTHER INVITED PRESENTATIONS

(Full list of conference presentations available upon request)

- Presentation as expert at the Judicial Dialogue with the Judges at the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal in Sri Lanka, organised by the Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and the Rule of Law, the Gilbert + Tobin Centre of Public Law at the University of New South Wales, in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Judges’ Institute, Aug 2025
- 7th Annual Chevette-Marx Lecture in Constitutional Law at Université de Montréal, Oct 2024
- 2nd Annual Bonavero Human Rights Lecture at University of Oxford, June 2023
- Plenary speaker on ‘Constitutional Governance in Crisis?’, World Congress of the International Association of Constitutional Law, University of Johannesburg, Dec 2022

- Plenary speaker at the Global Summit 2021 organized by the International Forum on the Future of Constitutionalism, sponsored by the University of Texas at Austin and presented in partnership with the International Society of Public Law, Jan 2021 (held virtually)
- Participant in conference on ‘Academic Freedom in Asia’ at University of Chicago Yuen Campus in Hong Kong, Dec 2025
- Participant in workshop on ‘The Politics of Legal Space’ at the University of Toronto, May 2023
- Public lecture on ‘Hong Kong in China, Or Hybridity and its Discontents’, hosted by Bocconi University Law School, June 2021 (held virtually)
- Public lecture on ‘From Legal Pluralism to Dual State: Evolution of the Relationship Between the Chinese and Hong Kong Legal Orders’, hosted by Columbia Law School’s Hong Yen Chang Center for Chinese Legal Studies, April 2021 (held virtually)
- Public lecture on ‘China-Hong Kong Constitutional Relations: Problems and Prospects’ hosted by Humboldt University History Department, Nov 2020 (held virtually)
- Panellist at a virtual roundtable on ‘Covid-19 and Central Local Relations in Asia: Coming Together or Coming Apart?’ organized by National University of Singapore’s Centre for Asian Legal Studies, June 2020
- Lecture on ‘Can Hong Kong Endure as a Liberal Enclave in China? An analysis of the Hong Kong National Security Law’ for an online course on ‘The Future of Liberal Democracy: Global Dialogues with Leading Scholars’, organized by the International Forum on the Future of Constitutionalism, July 2020 (held virtually)
- Plenary Speaker on ‘Judicial Deference: A Principled Approach for Hong Kong’ in the capacity of Rapporteur of Hong Kong on the theme of ‘Deference to the Executive in Judicial Review’, at the International Academy of Comparative Law 20th Congress, Kyushu University, Fukuoka, July 2018
- Speaker on ‘Parliamentary Sovereignty’ and ‘Rule of Law’ at Wuhan University, China, April 2018
- Participant in conference on ‘The 20th Anniversary of the Implementation of the Hong Kong Basic Law: the Role and Limits of the Hong Kong Legislative Council’, Wuhan University, China, March 2017
- Speaker on ‘Legalizing Politics: an Evaluation of Hong Kong’s Recent Attempt at Democratization’, Oxford-Renmin-HKU conference on ‘Constitutional Traditions from China and the West’ held at Trinity College, Oxford, Sept 2016

- Speaker on ‘Measuring Judicial Deference in Constitutional Rights Adjudication’, Administrative Law Discussion Forum, Academic Sinica, Institutum Iurisprudentiae, Taipei, June 2014
- Speaker on ‘Implementing China and Hong Kong’s Preliminary Reference System: Transposability of Article 267 TFEU Principles’, Durham Law School, March 2014
- Speaker on ‘Measuring Judicial Deference in Constitutional Rights Adjudication’, Centre for Public Law Seminar, University of Cambridge, March 2014
- Speaker on ‘Implementing China and Hong Kong’s Preliminary Reference System: Transposability of Article 267 TFEU Principles’, UK-China Conference on Public Law, Renmin University Law School, Beijing, Sept 2013
- Speaker on ‘Proportionality and Invariable Baseline Intensity of Review’, workshop on ‘Proportionality and Democratic Accountability’ organised by Academia Sinica, Institutum Iurisprudentiae, Taipei, July 2013.

VISITING POSITIONS

- Visiting Professor, University of Virginia School of Law, 17-28 March 2025
- Distinguished Senior Research Fellow of Constitutional Studies Program at the University of Texas at Austin, fall 2024-2027
- Guest lecturer, Wuhan University, April 2018
- Visiting scholar, University of Cambridge, 3-31 March 2014
- Visiting scholar, Faculty of Law, University of Durham, 10-14 June 2013

TEACHING

- Awardee of the HKU Faculty Outstanding Teaching Award 2014
- Courses taught include LLB and JD Constitutional Law and Administrative Law

MAJOR ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES

- Director of the Centre for Comparative and Public Law at HKU (Sept 2024 – present)
- Director of the Bachelor of Laws programme and Deputy Department Head (July 2017 – Sept 2024)
- Member of the Faculty Research Committee (Sept 2014 – present)

- Member of the Faculty of Law's Promotion and Tenure Panel (July 2018 – Aug 2024)

COMMUNITY SERVICE AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

(Full list available upon request)

- Panelist at CCPL Panel Discussion on 'Court-Legislature Dialogue: Sham Tsz Kit and its Aftermath' (3 Nov 2025)
- Appointed as a mentor in the Hong Kong Government's 「共創明 Teen 計劃」 (Strive and Rise programme) aimed at providing support to underprivileged youth in Hong Kong (2023 – 2024)
- Speaker at CCPL Panel Discussion on 'Sham Tsz Kit v Secretary for Justice: A New Chapter for Same Sex Couples in Hong Kong' (8 Nov 2023)
- Speaker at panel discussion on 'When Individual Rights Meet Public Interests' organised by the Law Association of the HKUSU (Oct 2022)
- Speaker at two panel discussions on the Hong Kong National Security Law organised by the Faculty of Law (July 2020 and June 2021)
- Assisted the Hong Kong Jockey Club Scholarship Secretariat in its Talent Development Strategy Study by participating in a focus group discussion (2021)
- Featured in City Magazine on the rule of law in Hong Kong (City Magazine, April 2019 issue, pp 80-83)
- Speaker in the episode on 'Judicial Review' of the programme 'Hong Kong Connection' by Radio Television Hong Kong (6 Feb 2017).
- Op-ed: 'How Hong Kong's courts interpret Beijing's interpretation of the Basic Law may yet surprise', *South China Morning Post*, 9 November 2016
- Adviser to Empowerment for All, a project initiated by law undergraduates to assist NGOs in Hong Kong with their legal and policy research (Dec 2014 – June 2016)
- Op-ed: 'Court's ruling on transgender marriage rights raises hopes for other minorities' *South China Morning Post*, 21 May 2013
- Conducting workshops to introduce the Basic Law to the general public, as part of the Basic Law Comic / Motion Comic Design Contest organised by the Hong Kong Government Home Affairs Bureau and Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education (27 Oct & 3 Nov 2012)

- Recording of the Radio Television Hong Kong programme ‘Opening the door to politics’ (「政門大開」), aimed at enhancing the public’s understanding of basic political and legal concepts.
- Assisted in designing activities on promoting the rule of law for Teen Talk 2011, organised by the Law Society of Hong Kong. Over 2,000 secondary school students attended the event.
- Adjudicator of the 3rd Basic Law Contest organised by the Joint Committee for the Promotion of the Basic Law of Hong Kong, 2010. Over 3,500 students participated in the event.